



Michigan Reads!

PROGRAMMING AND RESOURCE GUIDE

September 2015





TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	5
LITERACY DEVELOPMENT.....	6
SELECT LITERACY COMPONENTS.....	6
SUPPORTING LITERACY SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY AGE.....	8
THE VALUE OF SHARED READING.....	16
READING ENVIRONMENT – TIPS FOR HOME, LIBRARIES AND SCHOOL.....	19
QUICK TIPS FOR PARENTS.....	20
RESOURCES...MORE GREAT BOOKS TO SHARE WITH CHILDREN.....	26
DIGITAL RESOURCES: WEBSITES AND CELL PHONE AND TABLET APPLICATIONS.....	28
RESOURCES: FOR FAMILIES USING THE LIBRARY.....	31
RESOURCES: FOR LIBRARIANS WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS.....	32
PROGRAMMING TIPS FOR LIBRARIANS.....	33
NOTES FOR EDUCATORS WHEN THINKING ABOUT STANDARDS.....	33
ACTIVITIES FOR DO UNTO OTTERS.....	35
• INFANTS.....	36
• TODDLERS.....	38
• PRESCHOOLERS.....	40
• SCHOOL AGE.....	44
TEMPLATES AND ACTIVITY SHEETS.....	47
REFERENCES.....	60



INTRODUCTION

ABOUT MICHIGAN READS

Sponsored by the Library of Michigan Foundation in partnership with the Library of Michigan, Michigan Reads! is a program recognizing the link between libraries and children and families in providing quality books, programs, and services. Using the “One Book, One Community” as a model, the Michigan Reads! program supports the foundation early literacy skills provides to future reading and success in school and beyond. With a goal of sharing reading experiences with children from birth through school age, the Michigan Reads! program includes specific attention to activities that are play-based in nature that enable librarians, early childhood educators, families and caregivers, or anyone else who spends time with young children resources to support developing literacy skills in young children.

Additional information about Michigan Reads! program and sponsors can be found at the Library of Michigan Website at <http://www.michigan.gov/michiganreads>.

ABOUT THE BOOK

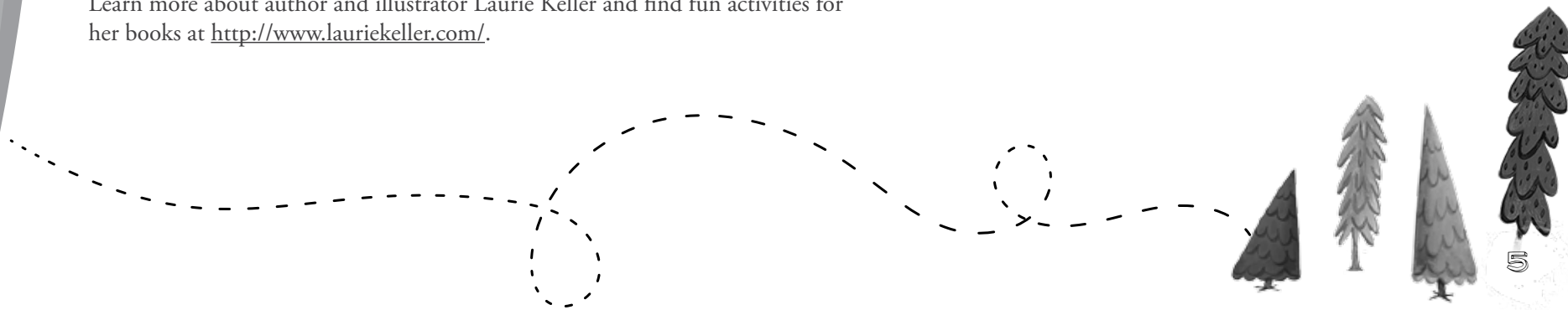
The 2015 Michigan Reads! book is Do Unto Otters, written and illustrated by Laurie Keller.

When Mr. Rabbit gets new neighbors, he isn't sure what to do. He learns from Mr. Owl to treat his new Otter neighbors just as he would want to be treated in this hilarious and cleverly illustrated rendition explaining manners and “the Golden Rule.”

You can find an animated, read a long version of Do Unto Otters at www.MeL.org in the Bookflix database. (LINK)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Learn more about author and illustrator Laurie Keller and find fun activities for her books at <http://www.lauriekeller.com/>.



LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS LITERACY?

Literacy skills develop in young children as a result of appropriate materials and timely experiences provided by the adults around them in an effort to build upon and expand their growing skills as part of spending time together. What was once thought of as only reading and writing, literacy has now expanded to include a child's ability to read, write, speak, and visually represent ideas (National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and International Reading Association (IRA), 1996). The development of these skills is essential based on careful attention to individual children, the materials, and the experiences that best fit their needs.

Research suggests that well before children begin formal school, they develop literacy skills that will serve as a foundation for future reading success. This includes skills such as concepts of print, comprehension, paying attention to sounds in language (phonological awareness), development of vocabulary, and writing. Recent research by the National Early Literacy Panel suggests that the early literacy skills important for future literacy success include the ability to write their name, how they pay attention to sounds (phonological awareness), and their ability to identify letters of the alphabet (Lonigan, Schatschneider, & Westberg, 2008). More importantly, these skills can be influenced by the experiences made available to them because of the adults around them (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Britto & Brooks-Gunn, 2001; Britto, Brooks-Gunn, & Griffin, 2006; Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell, 1994; Senechal & LaFevre, 2002; Zill & Resnick, 2006).



SELECT LITERACY COMPONENTS

COMPREHENSION

- As children make meaning from text they read or that is read to them, they engage in comprehension, which some consider one of the most important aspects of reading (Bennett-Armistead, Duke, & Moses, 2005).
- Understanding the text can take place long before children can actually read the words and can happen no matter what type of book is read. This makes it even more important to read a variety of books to young children, whether storybooks to learn how to retell the beginning, middle, and end of stories, informational texts to pick out facts, or other types of books such as poetry books to connect to their own lives. When adults read with children and encourage them to be actively involved in the reading, they model and facilitate the development of the comprehension skills and strategies good readers use to gain understanding of the text they are reading.

CLOSE OR DEEP READING

- As children read text or have text read to them, it is important for them to gain the meaning of the words they are reading, but also to go one step further. Close or deep reading does just that by taking traditional comprehension strategies and extending them just a bit more. Rather than just asking children to predict what might happen next or what they thought about something that has happened in the book, close reading asks children to think intentionally about small pieces of the text in order to get more out of it. Close reading involves taking a smaller section of the text and investigating it closely to think about why an author might have chosen particular words, what vocabulary words might mean, looking for patterns or symbols, or considering points of view (Wheeler, 2014). Typically it involves reading high-quality text once, then going back to read again for a more thorough discussion to observe and interpret what is being read (Rosenblatt, 1995).

INFORMATIONAL OR NON-FICTION BOOKS

- Informational text, or text that shares about nature or social worlds (Kamberelis, 1998; Wollman-Bonilla, 2000), is just as important for children to read as storybooks. Usually written by someone who knows more about a subject than someone else, its purpose is to explain, persuade, or share an opinion about something else on a subject. Children will encounter more of this type of text as they move from grade to grade, but it can also be read or heard without having to look at the pictures or illustrations in order to make meaning of the text. In other words, because informational text does not have to be read in a specific order, children do not have to see the pictures or illustrations to help with their understanding of what is being read. Adults and children enjoy storybooks, but it's also important to read other books like informational texts (Duke, 2007) at an early age so they learn how to read them and what they can learn from them.

VOCABULARY

- The words we use when talking with young children while playing, singing, and simply talking help to develop their vocabulary. By the time they enter kindergarten, most children will have heard between 13 and 45 million words (Hart & Risley, 1995). Learning new words is helpful as they take part in conversations or listen to directions, but also as they learn to read. The more words children know, the more they are able to make sense of the world around them, but also to understand the words as they are reading, which will help them to make sense of the text.

WRITING

- A child's first marks on paper are immensely important as early attempts at communication through writing (Bloodgood, 1999). Their first efforts at writing or simple marks on a page (Bodrova & Leong, 2006) then morph into scribbles, and then transition into recognizable letters as they watch and learn from other children and adults around them write. As important as it is for them to see other's writing, they also need the chance to write themselves to develop their own ideas about how to form the letters and what marks to make on the page. This also gives them an idea of how to share their thoughts with others through the written word.



SUPPORTING LITERACY SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY AGE

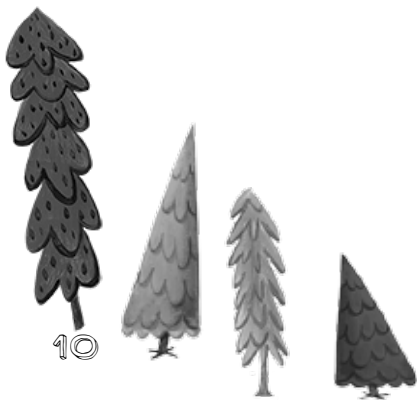
How adults help young children develop literacy skills is one of the most important things they can do. Beginning even when expecting, adults can talk with or sing to a baby. When they are infants and continuing as they progress through school, the experiences adults offer and the developmentally appropriate materials they provide are essential to helping young children develop these skills. Consider the following based on the different age groups to support their literacy learning:



INFANTS AND EXPECTANT MOTHERS

- Talk as much as you can as often as you can with your growing baby, before birth and after. Babies will turn their heads to the sounds of the voices they hear in the womb, so talking or reading during pregnancy helps baby to learn the sound of your voice. With babies, talk a lot, as soon as possible. Explain what you are doing, why, and when. Talk about what you are doing together, whether it is sharing about where you are going, what is going to happen, or when you are doing something together. Be sure to give baby time to respond, wait to hear what the response is, and take time to expand on whatever you think baby had to say. Using soft words when you are in conversation with baby will not only encourage baby to continue to talk, but will also help in learning new vocabulary.
- Talk about the books that you read together. You can do this while you are pregnant or after the baby is born. As you read a book, relate something in the book to something that is happening in his or her life. Look for patterns in the pictures or text and repeat the patterns, pointing them out. Look at the pictures and talk about what is happening in the illustrations. Ask questions about the story and wait for his or her response.

- Read together and read often. Read favorite books of any format more than once, including cloth books, board books, favorite storybooks, concept books about colors or shapes, nursery rhymes, and even poetry books with bright pictures or colorful illustrations. Try to read for 30 minutes a day, breaking up your reading sessions throughout the day. You can also allow baby to choose books by touching which book to read, or choose a book that is a favorite from when you were young.
- Point out letters of the alphabet when you see them. Look for letters in infants' names or look for one letter throughout the day in books or in the environment. Look for uppercase and lowercase letters as you go about your day, saying both the name of the letter and the sound that letter makes.
- Sing as you go about your day whether you are pregnant or after your baby is born. Sing favorite songs from when you were a child, hum a lullaby to help baby fall asleep at naptime or at night, or sing aloud to the radio while in the car. You can even make up songs as you play together, get groceries and add items to the cart, or are finishing up tasks like folding laundry.
- Write with babies. Try writing in front of them and telling them not only what you are writing about, but how to form the letters as you are making them, such as "I'm writing the letter B right now as it is the first letter in 'baby'." Try giving infants writing materials that are safe for practicing their early writing skills, such as non-toxic finger paints, or gel pads or water mats.





TODDLERS

- Read favorite books with toddlers over and over again. Have their favorite books available for them to read whenever they want, encouraging them to “read” independently by looking at the pictures or reading from memory to a stuffed animal. You can show them how to treat books by demonstrating how to hold books, turn pages gently, and treat books with respect.
- Point out new words as you read, in conversation, or in songs. Explain what new words mean using words the toddler already knows. Try repeating the new words, explain their meaning using words in the child’s vocabulary, and then repeat the new words again. By using the new word several times throughout the day, you can help the word become part of a toddler’s vocabulary too.
- Find books by a favorite author or on a cherished topic. Look for books in the library from an author your toddler has enjoyed or ask your children’s librarian for help in finding books about a theme or topic toddlers enjoy. Ask toddlers to identify topics they enjoy too.
- Write with toddlers, using whatever is available in a wide variety of materials. Consider the usual paper, crayons, pencils, and markers, but try adding chalk, colored pencils, tissue paper, and thick paper as well. You can also write in the air, in dirt with dull sticks or smooth rocks, on the rug in front of you, or even on the back of your hand as you work together to form letters. Try play dough or modeling clay to work on their pincer grasp necessary for writing and to shape into both upper and lowercase letters.
- Read a favorite storybook and ask toddlers to share more about a character in the book. Ask the toddler to find the character on each page and what they think the character is doing in the illustration. Encourage the toddler to describe how the character is like them or ask how something you just read reminds the toddler of something in their own life.
- Find letters with toddlers. Look for letters as you read books together and ask toddlers to help you make the sound of that letter too. See if you can find all of the letters of the alphabet as you read a book or focus on the first letter of a toddler’s name.



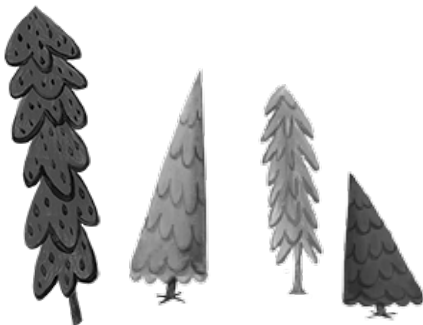
PRESCHOOLERS

- Choose books to read with a common theme or topic, such as manners. As you select books from your own collection or borrow from the library, try to select different types of books within the topic or theme such as storybooks, informational text, poetry, or other books that encourage children to interact with the text.
- Read a book more than once as you explore a particular theme. For example, you might read *Do Unto Otters* the first time and ask preschoolers what they noticed about Mr. Rabbit and his new neighbors, the Otters. After reading it a second time, you might ask preschoolers to think about manners and what they think about Mr. Rabbit and manners, or what advice they would give to Mr. Rabbit about being kind to the Otters. Remind preschoolers to pay attention to the pictures, to ask questions about what they see, and to make up stories about the illustrations on the pages too to help encourage their love for reading.
- Notice new vocabulary words as you read books together. Look for words that might be new as you come across them in text, explain the meaning of the word in language preschoolers understand, and use the word throughout the day.
- Write with purpose with preschoolers. Ask preschoolers to write a thank you note with you or one of their own. Offer them paper and pencils, markers, or crayons to write their notes, or have stationary available. Model how to write thank you notes and show them how they look different from stories, recipes, or other text they might see.
- Read books and ask preschoolers to connect what you are reading together to things in their own lives. Ask questions such as “how does this remind you of something you have done?” or “what happened when you...?”
- Write preschoolers’ names with them and have them practice writing on their own. Form the letters together, talking about the shapes the letters make as you write. Allow them to write at their own pace, and give them examples in print when they need them. Show them that the first letter is an uppercase letter and the remaining letters are lowercase letters. You can also ask them to find their name on their belongings, in books you read together, or in the classroom.
- Find a character or image in the book. Ask preschoolers what they think of that image, if it reminds them of something they’ve seen already in the book (and where), and how the images connect to one another or to things in their own lives.



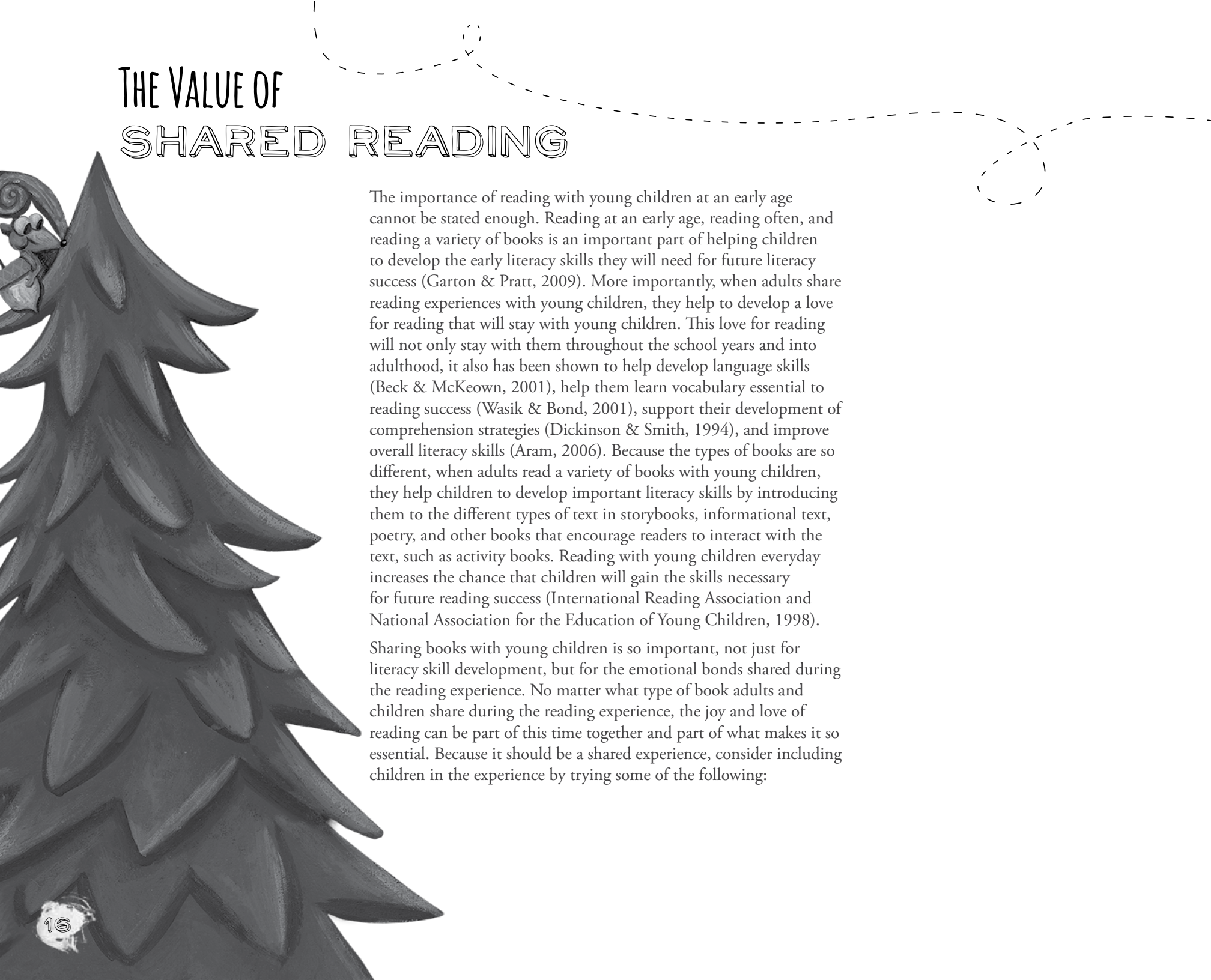
SCHOOL AGE

- Read books at a special time each day with school age children. Ask them to find books they find interesting or suggest titles or themes you think they might enjoy. Try to set aside at least 30 minutes a day which can be broken up into smaller blocks, with the idea that children can read the books they like during this time.
- Talk with school age children. Ask them about their day, what they plan to do later in the day, or something that someone else did for them that they thought was particularly nice. Focus your conversation on being helpful or kind, like the manners theme in *Do Unto Otters*, and help them put words to the actions in the book, while also introducing them to new words.
- Write a thank you journal with school age children. Each day write a note to a school age child thanking him or her for something specific the child has done or noting something for which you can be thankful. Encourage the child to write back in the journal. Children can write to a specific prompt, such as “tell me about something you are thankful for today” or “how did it feel when someone said thank you for...” Encourage children to write for a specific time period, and ask them to finish their thoughts at the end of the time period too. Be sure to respond to their writing so they know you are thankful for their writing as well.
- Keep a list of new words you find as you read. Children can keep their lists in word journals or you can have a word wall for sharing their “new word” discoveries. Be sure to have them include not only the word, but the meaning of the word and how to use it in a sentence. Take time to share the new words in conversation to allow children a chance to use their words as part of an authentic experience too.
- Make inferences from text. As you read a book with school age children, ask them to think about what an author might have left out. For example, as you read *Do Unto Otters*, you might ask children why Mr. Rabbit might be concerned about having the Otters for new neighbors.
- Have children “pair share” books they have read. After reading a book, encourage them to tell a partner about the book from beginning to end and then switch, with the partner doing the same. As a way to switch up the pair share, children can tell one another what they think is the most important detail from their books, or what they think the author would want people to know about the book they have read.
- Create a designated writing area that encourages children to write, whether at home or in classrooms. Be sure to allow children time to visit this space and stock it with appropriate materials for writing of different types, whether the creation of stories, lists, letters, or even business cards. Have children help you think about what items might need to be in this area, but consider starting with paper, notebooks, pencils, crayons, pens, markers, envelopes, and perhaps even a mail center as they write letters to each other.
- Focus on particular sections of text as you read together. Read the book through once. Then, the second time you read, spend more time on specific sections. Ask children why the author might have chosen certain illustrations, such as the section on sharing and the particular “treats” Mr. Rabbit and the otter are holding. Or, ask children to think about why the author might have listed those particular items as things we might share and how they relate back to the theme of manners.
- Choose books of different types with a common theme. Think about a theme of a favorite book, like manners in *Do Unto Otters*, and look for other storybooks, informational text, and other books like poetry or activity books with the same theme that you can then be available for school age children to read. Ask them to note what is the same or different about these different types of text as well.





THE VALUE OF SHARED READING



The importance of reading with young children at an early age cannot be stated enough. Reading at an early age, reading often, and reading a variety of books is an important part of helping children to develop the early literacy skills they will need for future literacy success (Garton & Pratt, 2009). More importantly, when adults share reading experiences with young children, they help to develop a love for reading that will stay with young children. This love for reading will not only stay with them throughout the school years and into adulthood, it also has been shown to help develop language skills (Beck & McKeown, 2001), help them learn vocabulary essential to reading success (Wasik & Bond, 2001), support their development of comprehension strategies (Dickinson & Smith, 1994), and improve overall literacy skills (Aram, 2006). Because the types of books are so different, when adults read a variety of books with young children, they help children to develop important literacy skills by introducing them to the different types of text in storybooks, informational text, poetry, and other books that encourage readers to interact with the text, such as activity books. Reading with young children everyday increases the chance that children will gain the skills necessary for future reading success (International Reading Association and National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1998).

Sharing books with young children is so important, not just for literacy skill development, but for the emotional bonds shared during the reading experience. No matter what type of book adults and children share during the reading experience, the joy and love of reading can be part of this time together and part of what makes it so essential. Because it should be a shared experience, consider including children in the experience by trying some of the following:

- Ask children to select books to read of interest to them or choose books you know they will like. Pick a blend of books from which to choose that include storybooks, informational text, and other books that engage the reader, such as activity books. Consider poetry books as well as biographies too. While reading, talk about each type of book, what you notice each book and how it is the same or different from other books that you have read so children start to understand the purpose of different types of text.
- Talk about the things in books as you read. Ask children to tell you about the things they already know and help them to build on that knowledge as you read together. Ask questions and listen to their responses. Point out illustrations and have conversations as you read to learn more about what children know and help them to build on their existing knowledge as you read together.
- Listen to children's comments and questions as you read. Instead of reading a book straight through, stop to talk about what a character might be doing on a particular page or to think about why the illustrator might have drawn a character in a particular way. Ask children what they think might happen next, but also check back with them to see if their predictions were accurate and why they think the author might have written the text a certain way.



- Take time to look at the illustrations or photos in the book. Ask children to think about the illustrations or photos and how they connect to the text you are reading or their own lives as you are reading. You might ask them to think about how the illustrations or photos remind them of something they have done before or say something like, “tell me what this picture makes you think about in your life...”
- Ask questions that don't have one answer. Asking open-ended questions help you to understand what children are learning about the book and also what they are comprehending about the text. Starting your questions with “how” or “why” are great ways to create conversations about the book and discover what children think about what you are reading together.

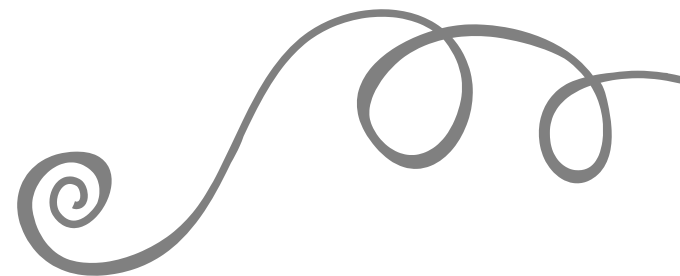




READING ENVIRONMENT –

TIPS FOR HOME, LIBRARIES AND SCHOOL

- Have books available for children to access at any time. For each child, whether at home or in an early childhood education setting, there should be five to eight books available of a variety of genres.
- Change the books that are available to children to give them something new to read. Keep favorite books available, but consider swapping some new books to pique their interest. Try books that are on the same topic or theme, informational text or poetry books, or activity books that encourage them to interact with the book about subjects of interest to them to “mix it up”.
- Create a special reading place for young children with all types of reading materials. Include books as previously noted, but try adding newspapers or magazines, audio books, flannel boards or puppets (you can even make these yourself or with children), or other props to accompany books, and even writing materials. If you are concerned children will write in books, spend time talking with them about how to use the writing materials and to be respectful of the books. Be sure to include comfortable seating or large pillows that invite children to read in this space too.
- Have a special writing area just for children. Ask children to help you brainstorm a list of items they might need for this space or to gather items from your home or early childhood education setting to go in this spot. Libraries might choose to have a writing area near the circulation desk to help monitor what takes place here. Consider adding paper, with recycled paper from the printer a great way idea to reduce cost, crayons and pencils, a stapler and other office supplies, and recycled envelopes for children to send letters.
- Model reading in the home, in libraries, and in early childhood education settings for young children. Think carefully about the way in which reading experiences are offered for the age of the children in your home, the library, or your classroom as well as how children are encouraged to take part in these experiences.



QUICK TIPS FOR PARENTS

Parents are busy, so quick, easy, and free or inexpensive suggestions for supporting literacy skills at home can be helpful to have. The tip sheets offered here are written with parents of preschoolers in mind and can be provided as a handout for families with busy preschoolers who are on the move.

CLOSE OR DEEP READING

Sharing books with your child is one of the most important things you can do together. Reading together, whether it is a new book that you are discovering for the first time or the same book over and over, is helpful to help support children's understanding of what we read. As you examine part of a favorite book or read the same book several times, you can help your child to look at books more "closely", a skill children need to develop to understand what it is they are reading. Try some of the following as you help them learn how to do this:

- Pick books that are high-quality, with bright illustrations and rich text. Check with your children's librarian for ideas of books that your child might like based on other books you have enjoyed together or on topics you know your child likes.
- Focus on one page in the book together, looking at only that page. Ask your child to tell you what he notices about the page, such as what the otters are doing when they introduce themselves as Mr. Rabbit's neighbors. Ask him what he thinks each of the otters are doing and what Mr. Rabbit might be thinking.

- Read the same book more than once, paying attention to a different part of the book each time you read. The first time you read spend time enjoying the book together. The next time you might look for new words together. A different time you read, you might look for patterns in the book, such as what happens to a particular character. Let your child guide how you read together or what you look for each time you read.
- Look for connections in the book as you read. You might look for an image that is carried throughout the book, or a "minor" character on each page that might also be important to the story. For example, in *Do Unto Otters*, children might notice Mr. Owl and talk about his role in the story and why he is important.
- Ask children what they notice in the text of the story too. See if they notice any interesting words, such as the different languages used for please, thank you, and excuse me used in *Do Unto Otters*. You can also ask them if they know any other phrases in different languages too.



COMPREHENSION

Children are able to make meaning from what they read or what is read to them, which some consider the most important part of reading. Comprehension, or understanding what we read or what is read to us, can actually take place before children are able to read on their own, no matter what type of book it is that is read. This is also why it is important to read different types of books, such as storybooks, information books, and other books such as poetry books or books that encourage children to interact with the text. Each time you read, encourage children to have an active role as you read together as this will help them to develop important comprehension skills. For example, when you ask your child about what just happened in a storybook, you are helping to develop her summarization skills. When you read information books and you ask her to share something she learned from the book, she is learning to pay attention to details as she reads. This type of shared reading is called “responsive reading” and helps children to learn concepts, skills, and strategies that good readers use to help them understand what they are reading. More importantly, they are skills they will use throughout their school years.

You can help children develop these skills for comprehending text by trying some of the following:

- Read books of different types or genres. Try reading storybooks, information books, and other types of books such as poetry books or books that ask the reader to interact with the text. No matter how old your child is, ask questions with more than one answer while you read and take time to have a conversation with your child when she answers.
- Talk about books with babies, taking the time to listen to responses and elaborate on what babies have to say. Use their coos and babbles as starting points for a conversation to connect the book to things in a baby’s life. For example, you might talk about a letter you received in the mail, pointing out a letter a character in the book received as well.

- Ask toddlers to help you “read” parts of the book that are familiar. This could be words you see repeated in text, such as “otters” in *Do Unto Otters* or the “doo-dee-doo” song Mr. Rabbit sings. Point out where this text occurs as you read it, being sure to follow up on any questions toddlers might ask, or asking your own such as “why does Mr. Rabbit sing that song?”
- Talk with preschoolers about what is happening in the book. Ask them to summarize what has happened so far in the book or to predict what is going to take place next. After reading the next page, be sure to check back with them to see how they felt about their prediction. As you reach the end of the book, ask them to share what the entire book was about or what they might tell a friend about the book. For books that aren’t storybooks, ask children to tell you a favorite fact they learned or what their favorite part of the book was if it was a poetry book.
- Encourage school age children to talk about the text as part of longer conversations. Ask them to think about how the book is similar to other books they have read, something they have heard about in the world, or their own lives. Some children enjoy “walking” back through a book page-by-page retelling what happened, while others prefer to share a quick recap of the book in just a few sentences. Either way, ask children to provide some details of the book, including who was in the book, where it took place, what the problem was, and how it was resolved.

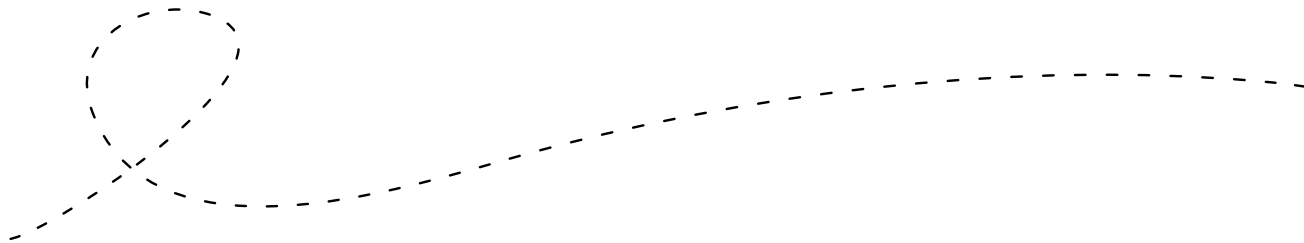




INFORMATIONAL OR NON-FICTION BOOKS

Reading to young children is important, and we often choose storybooks because we enjoy favorite characters or easy-to-read storylines. It is also important to read other types of books, such as informational text. When children read or have books read to them about the things they see or do every day, it helps them to learn more about these things. It also gives them a chance to learn new words, understand new ideas they will need as they start school, or to learn about new places, people, or things not part of their everyday lives. Reading informational books can seem challenging at first, but try some of the following ideas:

- Pick informational books based on the interests of your child or things you have already been talking or reading about. If your child enjoys *Do Unto Otters*, look for informational books about otters or even manners. You can start with books about broad concepts such as shapes or numbers or try more specific topics based on the topics your child enjoys. Let your child guide the selection, and just be sure to add information books as you look at storybooks too.
- Talk about the difference between informational text and other types of text, such as storybooks. Look at the book and talk about what is different about informational books and the purpose of this type of text. Share with your child that these types of text help us to learn about the world around us. Show your child both photos and illustrations can be found in informational books so they learn to expect to see either one in books intended to help them learn new things.
- Go through informational books together. Talk about the different parts of the book, showing your child that this kind of book might have different parts than a storybook or an activity book. Show your child how informational books might look the same as far as front and back covers, but they might have a table of contents, an index, or a glossary. Be sure to explain how we use these different parts of the book and show children how to use them too.
- Discuss informational text as you read. It's important to show children that we don't have to read informational books from front cover to back cover, but can skip around and still be able to understand what we read. You can help children understand this concept by reading with them and asking them to share a detail from a specific section you've read or using the index of informational text to look up a particular fact.
- Use informational text to relate these types of books to things that are happening in your child's life. If you are getting new neighbors, find a book about how to greet a new family. If your child is wondering about how to write a thank you note, find a book that can help her think about how to share her thoughts on paper.



VOCABULARY

Most children learn new words by talking with others around them, hearing them in books, through singing songs, and by simply playing. By kindergarten, most children will have learned between 3,000 and 5,000 words and these words will help them as readers. The more words children learn when they are younger, the easier it will be to read words they come across in text. It is simply easier to read words we have heard before and know than words we have never heard before. Try some of the following to help your child learn new words:

- Read to your child every day. Read storybooks, informational books, poetry books, and books that involve your child in the text. Books are a great way to introduce new words to your child, no matter what kind you read together.
- Talk with your child and ask him questions, waiting for the answer. Ask for explanations, for descriptions, or for clarification to give him a chance to use more words. Expand on what he says and give him a chance to tell you more.
- Find a word of the day. Look for a new word each day to share with your child and use words he already knows to explain the meaning of this new word.
- Take time to talk about things with your child. Discuss anything and everything, no matter where you are. Using the right words for his understanding will help him to learn new words, gain an understanding of new words, and to develop his vocabulary. Avoid using words that are too advanced, just as you would avoid 'baby talk' too.
- Practice describing things together. Start by using one word to describe an object, such as the "fuzzy" rabbit and then add more words together, such as the "brown, fuzzy rabbit, with the long, furry ears." Ask him to tell you more about what the rabbit might do, such as "hop quickly along the path with strong, fast legs."



WRITING

Children learn to write based on their opportunities with materials and as they add words to their vocabulary. In other words, as they add words to their vocabulary, they can communicate those words on paper, but they need to have the writing materials available and someone to show them how to use them. Their first attempts at writing might not look like much to adults, but they mean a lot to children. As they develop the skills necessary to form letters, they will also develop the literacy skills necessary to put the right letters for the right sounds and to form words too. What is most important for children to develop writing skills is that they have a chance to practice. This means that adults have to not only show them what writing looks like, in different forms, but to also give children a chance to try it out too. Writing children's names is a great way to start as it allows them to start with letters that are meaningful for them. As they learn that writing letters is really a matter of variations of the same motion, they can use the letters in their name to create new words, add to the letters in their names by learning where a letter needs an extra line or loop, and so on. Writing isn't just the formation of letters, but also the ideas in the writing itself. You can encourage children as they develop writing skills, both the actual formation of letters and the thoughts that make up their writing in some of the following:

- Have objects available for infants that help develop the pincer grasp necessary for holding the things they will write with later. Have things like blocks, stacking cups, or other items that are large enough that they won't choke on them but will require them to use a thumb and forefinger when they are picking them up. You can also offer non-toxic finger paints to infants while you supervise to help them discover and develop early writing skills.

- Offer toddlers a collection of writing materials to allow them to write independently. Try having different kinds of writing papers and even old newspapers, as well as the usual crayons, pencils, washable markers, pens, or even take sidewalk chalk outside. You can write a toddler's name for him to try tracing or copying too. Consider asking a toddler to share his ideas and writing them down as you write a story together too.
- Write in front of preschoolers, talking about the letters as you write them, but also the purpose for your writing. Explain not only what you are writing, but why you are writing. If you are writing a thank you note, take the time to share with preschoolers why you are writing and what you are including in your note. Talk about the letters that make up each word and stretch out the sounds as you write or how the letters are formed. Offer writing materials to preschoolers so they might write their own notes too.
- Encourage children in the primary grades to use writing to share their thoughts. Create a special spot with writing materials available for them and ask them to write notes or short letters, letting them leave notes for one another to say thank you, to ask for help, or just to say "hi". Remind school age children they can listen for the sounds in words as they write or you can help them stretch out words. More importantly, have them think about what they want to say when they are writing so their ideas are put on paper.



RESOURCES...

MORE GREAT BOOKS TO SHARE WITH CHILDREN

DIVERSITY/CULTURES

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

- ***So Much!*** by Trish Cooke, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury (Candlewicke, 2008)
- ***“More More More,” Said the Baby*** (boardbook) by Vera B. Williams (Greenwillow Books, 1997)
- ***Fiesta Babies*** by Carmen Tafolla, illustrated by Amy Cordova (Tricycle Press, 2010)
- ***Global Babies*** (boardbook) by The Global Fund for Children (Charlesbridge, 2007)
- ***Little You*** (boardbook) by Richard Van Camp, illustrated by Julie Flett (Orca Book Publishers, 2013)
- ***Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes*** (boardbook) by Mem Fox, illustrated by Helen Oxenbury (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2010)

FOR PRESCHOOLERS

- ***Little Blue and Little Yellow*** by Leo Lionni (HarperCollins, 1995)
- ***The Sandwich Swap*** by Queen Rania of Jordan Al Abdullah (Disney-Hyperion, 2010)
- ***The Colors of Us*** by Karen Katz (Square Fish, 2002)
- ***Whoever You Are*** by Mem Fox, illustrated by Leslie Staub (Reading Rainbow Books, 2006)
- ***Full, Full, Full of Love*** by Trish Cooke, illustrated by Paul Howard (Candlewicke, 2008)
- ***Handa’s Surprise*** by Eileen Browne (Scholastic, 1999)

FOR SCHOOL AGE

- ***One Green Apple*** by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Ted Lewin (Clarion Books, 2006)
- ***Jack & Jim*** by Kitty Crowther (Disney-Hyperion, 2000)
- ***The Big Orange Splot*** by Daniel Manus Pinkwater (Scholastic Paperbacks, 1993)
- ***The Sneetches and Other Stories*** by Dr. Seuss (Random House, 1961)
- ***David’s Drawings*** by Cathryn Falwell (Lee & Low Books, 2001)
- ***The Name Jar*** by Yangsook Choi (Dragonfly Books, 2003)
- ***How My Parent’s Learned to Eat*** by Ina R. Friendman, illustrated by Allen Say (Sandpiper Houghton Mifflin, 1987)



MANNERS

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

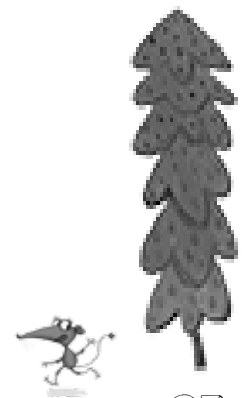
- ***Excuse Me! A Little Book of Manners*** by Karen Katz (Grosset & Dunlap, 2002)
- ***I Can Share: A Lift-the-Flap Book*** by Karen Katz (Grosset & Dunlap, 2004)
- ***Manners Time*** (board book) by Elizabeth Verdick, illustrated by Merieka Heinlen (Free Spirit Publishing, 2009)
- ***Oops, Sorry! A First Book of Manners*** by Richard Morgan (Barron's Educational Series, 2005)
- ***This Little Piggy's Book of Manners*** by Kathryn Madeline Allen, illustrated by Nancy Wolff (Henry Holt and Co., 2003)

FOR PRESCHOOLERS

- ***Richard Scarry's Please and Thank You Book*** by Richard Scarry (Random House Books for Young Readers, 1973)
- ***Hands Are Not for Hitting*** (board book) by Martine Agassi, illustrated by Marieka Heinlen (Free Spirit Publishing, 2002)
- ***I Just Forgot*** by Mercer Mayer (Golden Press, 1999)
- ***How Do Dinosaurs Play With Their Friends*** by Jane Yolen, illustrated by Mark Teague (The Blue Sky Press, 2006)
- ***Time to Say "Please!"*** by Mo Willems (Disney-Hyperion, 2005)
- ***Rules of the Wild: An Unruly Book of Manners*** by Bridget Levin, illustrated by Amanda Shepherd (Chronicle Books, 2004)

FOR SCHOOL AGE

- ***How to Behave and Why*** by Munro Leaf (Universe, 2002)
- ***Mind Your Manners!: A Kid's Guide to Proper Etiquette*** by Roz Fulcher (Dover Publications, 2013)
- ***The Berenstain Bears Forget Their Manners*** by Stan and Jan Berenstain (Random House Books for Young Readers, 1985)
- ***Soup Should Be Seen, Not Heard! A Complete Manners Book for Kids*** by Beth Brainard (Good Idea Kids, LLC, 2012)
- ***Manners at the Table*** (Way to Bel!: Manners) by Carrie Finn, illustrated by Chris Lensch (Picture Window Books, 2007)
- ***Manners*** by Aliko (Greenwillow Books, 1997)
- ***Should I Share My Ice Cream? (An Elephant and Piggie Book)*** by Mo Willems (Disney-Hyperion, 2011)





WOODLAND ANIMALS

FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

- ***In My Forest*** by Sara Gillingham, illustrated by Lorena Siminovich (Chronicle Books, 2010)
- ***Little Owl's Night*** by Divya Srinivasan (Penguin Young Readers Group, 2011)
- ***Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*** by Bill Martin Jr., illustrated by Eric Carle (Henry Hold and Co., 1992)
- ***Bear Has a Story to Tell*** by Philip C. Stead, illustrated by Erin E. Stead (Roaring Brook Press, 2012)
- ***Old Bear*** by Kevin Henkes (HarperCollins Publishers, 2008)

FOR PRESCHOOLERS

- ***Night-Night, Forest Friends*** by Annie Bach (Grosset & Dunlap, 2013)
- ***Baby Animals in the Forest*** by Editors of Kingfisher (Kingfisher, 2011)
- ***Over in the Forest: Come and Take a Peek*** by Marianne Berkes, illustrated by Jill Dubin (Dawn Publications, 2012)
- ***Who's in the Forest?*** By Phyllis Gershator, illustrated by Jill McDonald (Barefoot Books, 2010)
- ***Deep in the Forest*** by Brinton Turkle (Puffin Books, 1992)
- ***The Golden Bunny*** by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by Leonard Weisgard (Random House Children's Books, 2015)

FOR SCHOOL AGE

- ***Woods (One Small Square)*** by Donald M. Silver, illustrated by Patricia J. Wynne (W.H. Freeman & Co, 1995)
- ***Dark Emperor and Other Poems of the Night*** by Joyce Sidman, illustrated by Rick Allen (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2010)

- ***Whose Tracks Are These? A Clue Book of Forest Animals*** by James Nail, illustrated by Hyla Skudder (Roberts Rinehart, 1996)
- ***Forest Has a Song: Poems*** by Amy Ludwig VanDerwater, illustrated by Robbin Gourley (Clarion Books, 2013)
- ***Forest Child*** by Marni McGee, illustrated by A. Scott Banfill (Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 1994)
- ***Sounds of the Wild: Forest (pop up)*** by Maurice Pledger (Silver Dolphin Books, 2012)

DIGITAL RESOURCES: WEBSITES AND CELL PHONE AND TABLET APPLICATIONS

WEBSITES ABOUT READING

- **Association for Library Service to Children**
www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/aboutalsc/index.cfm

Each year the Association for Library Service to Children posts a list of award-winning children's books for both the current year and previous years archived on their website. This helpful resource offers not only book suggestions but also other suggestions for educators, families, and others supporting the development of literacy in young children.

- **Colorin Colorado**
www.colorincolorado.org/

This sister website to Scholastic offers research-based information and evidence-based practices for early childhood educators to help support speakers of other languages. Offering suggestions for both educators and families to support children learning English and Spanish, the site also has additional resources for speakers of a number of other languages too. Check out this site for tip sheets, ideas for books to use in classrooms and at home, and also multimedia resources and webcasts to support your own learning.

- **MeL Kids page**

www.mel.org/kids

Visit the children's page of the Michigan E-Library for their e book collection that you can read or listen to, including fiction and non-fiction, links to learning activities and games, a section all about Michigan including folklore, animals and insects, the city of Detroit, and Michigan history, and get help with homework, too. This site is loaded with databases for families and for teachers too.

- **Reading is Fundamental**

www.rif.org

This website is a valuable tool for finding books, activity ideas, games, and handouts for young children to use at home or in early childhood education settings.

- **Reading Rockets**

www.readingrockets.org

This website loaded with research-based information includes tip sheets, podcasts, and videos for early childhood educators and families for up-to-date information and resources to help support literacy development in young children.

- **Read Write Think**

www.readwritethink.org

Created primarily for teachers, this joint partnership between the International Reading Association and the National Council for Teachers of English includes a variety of materials helpful to any early childhood educator. This go-to site has not only classroom resources such as lesson plans with a search function, but resources for professional development, afterschool activities and families, and videos.

- **Scholastic**

www.scholastic.com

A classic educator site for ideas and resources, this site also has booklists and other helpful resources about supporting literacy development to share with families. If you are looking for more ideas for books to share with young children, be sure to check out Book Wizard, which will allow you to search for more books based on a book you already love or similar books based on a book's reading level.

- **Scholastic Bookflix**

www.mel.org (select databases in top left corner, select Bookflix)

This interactive website is free to Michigan users as part of the Library of Michigan's Michigan eLibrary. You can look up a book, and begin reading online. Intended for preschoolers through fifth grade, readers can explore non-fiction and fiction texts online in this great partnership for families and educators alike. Do Unto Otters is included at this website.

WEBSITES ABOUT DIVERSITY/CULTURES

- **All About Me: Human Rights in the US**

http://discoverhumanrights.org/uploads/human_rights_in_us_grades_k-2_2.pdf

Intended for Kindergarten through second graders, this website is intended to help children in the primary grades learn more about themselves and what makes them unique from others.





- **Children Around the World**

<http://www.discoveryeducation.com/teachers/free-lesson-plans/children-around-the-world.cfm>

This website provides lesson plans for educators to help children learn more about other cultures. Best for use with primary grades (but could be modified for younger children), the plans include suggestions for books to use as well as suggestions for research questions using the internet.

- **PBS Parent: Arthur's World**

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/arthur/lesson/world/>

PBS Parents and Arthur team up to provide activities and other resources to explain diversity with additional tips for teachers and families to explore the concept in classrooms and at home.

WEBSITES ABOUT MANNERS

- **A to Z of Manners and Etiquette**

<http://www.a-to-z-of-manners-and-etiquette.com/manners-and-etiquette-for-children.html>

In an easy-to-read list form, this website provides helpful hints of manners that children should know, which can be broken down for children (and adults) to read. Additional links are provided by topics, such as how to talk on the phone or etiquette with dogs too.

- **Emily Post: Manners**

<http://www.emilypost.com/home-and-family>

With articles, basic tip sheets, and a search function, Emily Post's website offers a way for children, early childhood educators, and families to learn more about manners.

WEBSITES ABOUT WOODLAND ANIMALS

- **Animal Fact Guide**

<http://www.animalfactguide.com/>

With a searchable animal database and wildlife blog, children can look up specific animals or explore the blog or fun stuff to learn more about animals that live in the woods.

- **Michigan Department of Natural Resources**

<http://michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10370---,00.html>

Utilize Michigan's Department of Natural Resources page to learn more about the wildlife species in our own state, including what specific animals live here, what they look like, their habitats, and how they live.

- **National Geographic Kids**

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>

This comprehensive site allows children to search for animals or simply look around the site to learn more about different animals, engage in educational activities, or play games.

- **National Wildlife Federation Kids**

<http://www.nwf.org/kids.aspx>

The National Wildlife Federation kids' website has links for parents and educators with articles and suggestions for connecting children with nature, but also links for children with games, apps, favorite children's magazines online such as Ranger Rick and Ranger Rick Jr. and ideas for activities families can do together, including activities outdoors and recipes and crafts.

CELL PHONE AND TABLET APPLICATIONS

The increasing availability of technology reminds us that it is important to remember how to think about its appropriate use with young children at home and in early childhood education settings. Michigan Reads! utilizes the guidelines provided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College in considering cell phone and tablet applications to offer for young children. These two organizations have partnered to offer guidelines about appropriate screen time for young children with a published document in 2012 which is consistent with 2011 guidelines published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) suggesting children under the age of 2 should not be exposed to screen time at all. The recommendations for cell phone and tablet applications are made with the above recommendation statement and guidelines in mind:



- **ABC Alphabet Phonics (iPad, iPod, and iPhone)**

An app that allows young children to identify upper and lowercase letters.

- **Aesop's Quest (iPad, iPod, and iPhone)**

To earn puzzle pieces, users must recall key story elements and complete a level. New stories can begin once puzzles are solved.

- **Mad Libs (iPad and iPhone)**

This app on the classic pad and pencil game helps children to learn the parts of speech and as a result, learn vocabulary words.

- **Our Story (iPad, iPod, and iPhone)**

This app allows children to create and read their own digital stories.

- **Out-A-Bout (iPad, iPod, and iPhone)**

This app from the Fred Rogers Center at Saint Vincent College encourages physical activity while the adult takes pictures of the child to integrate into a story you then read together.

- **Toontastic (iPad)**

This favorite includes drawing, writing, and animation that allows the user to “play back” their creation in an original cartoon.

RESOURCES: FOR FAMILIES USING THE LIBRARY

The library is a wonderful resource for families. Not only is there a children's section where children and their families can find books to borrow, the librarians here are particularly helpful in finding just the right book about a special topic, certain themes, or key concepts. Children's librarians are also able to help support children's developing literacy skills and can:

- Assist you in finding new books or old favorites according to a topic, theme, or concept. They can help you look for books in different genres too, being sure to include storybooks, informational books, and other books such as poetry, books that encourage the reader to interact with the text, folk and fairy tales, and songbooks, and nursery rhymes;

- Help you find new books by favorite authors or new authors based on a common theme. They can also let you know when a favorite author or illustrator will have a new book coming out and when the library will have the book available to borrow;
- Host story hours for children and their families, have book discussions for audiences of all ages, and have theater groups, children's concerts, or other musical events or special events at the library;
- Highlight books that share a common theme. If you are looking for more books about manners or want to learn about other cultures after reading books like *Do Unto Otters*, your children's librarian can help you look through what is available in the children's section and choose what books to borrow;
- Ask other libraries for books for children and families as part of “inter-library loan” as a way of expanding the local library's collection if the local library does not have a copy of a certain book;
- Develop and continue reading programs during vacation months. These programs are especially helpful to promote and support reading during summer vacation months;
- Talk with children about books they are reading to learn about other books the library might want to include in its collection, as well as to determine other titles to suggest to other children who visit the library;
- Partner with community groups in targeted outreach to support families that may not visit the library as often;
- Hold conversations about the current collection and how to best maintain and expand it with parents and educators;
- Share widely about the multiple services and programs the local library has available for children and audiences of all ages.



RESOURCES: FOR LIBRARIANS WORKING WITH FAMILIES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

The librarians in the children's section are a rich source of information for children, families, and early childhood educators. Whether it is your first time in the children's section or you are a regular to this section, the children's librarian can be a valuable resource and an important source of information. Not only are librarians helpful in sharing suggestions about books, they can show families and early childhood educators how to model and support literacy development skills for young children. Children's librarians can try some of the following suggestions to help supporting literacy development in early childhood education settings or in homes:

- Model how to read aloud to young children, using the strategies that research suggests are effective to support literacy skills development during shared reading experiences. Families and educators can see these practices in action and handouts available at the end of shared reading sessions can further support these practices at home or in early childhood education settings.
- Talk about words that might be new to children as you read, pointing them out in the text and using words that children would already know as you explain what they mean. Be sure to repeat the new or unfamiliar word again.
- Engage children in the book by asking questions about what is happening as you read. Ask questions about a specific part of the book, asking children to think about how the book relates to their own lives, another book you might have read together, or other books by the same author they might know.
- Talk about the part of the book before reading. If you are reading a storybook, be sure to include the title, author, and illustrator before you read the book. If you are reading informational text, make sure to draw attention to other parts of the book either before you start or as you are reading, such as the table of contents, index, or glossary. Be sure to explain the purpose of these parts of these components in informational books, too.
- Ask children to think about what is taking place in a book that might not be specifically written in the text. Encourage children to make inferences, or to think about what is not being explicitly stated by the author, to help them make meaning from the text.
- Think aloud about the text. Show children how to wonder aloud about text to help make meaning from the text and learn how to read closely. As you read the book, look closely at a page and focus your attention on an illustration, pointing out the things you notice, asking questions and explain why you are asking the question. For example, you might look at the page where Mr. Rabbit is thinking about what it means to cooperate and look closely at the illustration of the characters carrying the log, remarking how this illustration helps you think about what that word means.
- Write with children. Show them not only how to form the letters, but also the process of writing different types of text, such as lists, stories, and thank you notes. Talk about how you think about what you want to write, or content, and how you actually write the letters, words, and leave space between words and use punctuation.

PROGRAMMING TIPS FOR LIBRARIANS

- Work with community partners on behalf of families. Collaborating with other organizations that work regularly with families offers the opportunity for those organizations to learn more about the programming and services offered at the library and for valuable networking opportunities for all involved.
- Establish reading programs throughout the year. These can be during school vacations in both the summer and over winter breaks. Children as young as infants can start to develop a love for reading through these programs, which can continue as they progress through toddlerhood, enter their preschool years, and then move into formal schooling as independent readers.
- Present programming for children at appropriate times based on the different age groups the library serves. Mid-morning sessions that are short are ideal for young children, while older children in school are more likely to appreciate slightly longer and later afternoon or early evening sessions.
- Offer appropriate programming at suitable times based on the ages of each group served by the library. Consider the ages of children and programming times, scheduling short, mid-morning read aloud sessions for younger children while reserving later afternoon or early evening sessions for children who are in school.

NOTES FOR EDUCATORS WHEN THINKING ABOUT STANDARDS

The activities offered with this programming guide have been crosswalked with the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs, the Michigan Early Childhood Standards for Prekindergarten, and the Michigan Academic Standards for English Language Arts to help educators in early childhood education settings from birth through grade three supplement existing curricula. The state early childhood guidelines and academic standards are intended to provide a consistent set of learning expectations for children within the state of Michigan and guide the development of local curriculum. A crosswalk chart of the standards

and activities has been created for both early childhood and K-3, which teachers can access at www.michigan.gov/michiganreads. Teachers may also wish to modify some activities and apply appropriate standards for the modified activities at their discretion. Standards are also listed in shortened form after each activity (e.g. Standard B:4) to aid educators in identifying standards more easily, but is not an exhaustive identification of all standards for each activity.

Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/ECSQ_IT_approved_422341_7.pdf

Michigan Early Childhood Standards for Prekindergarten http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/ECSQ_OK_Approved_422339_7.pdf

Michigan Academic Standards for English Language Arts http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/K-12_MI_ELA_StandardsREV_470029_7.pdf





ACTIVITIES

FOR DO UNTO OTTERS

The following pages contain activities that can be used with children from birth through school age to support literacy development in the previously discussed areas of close or deep reading, comprehension, importance of information texts, vocabulary, and writing based on the themes identified in the book *Do Unto Otters*. The activities are separated by age group, but also by the amount of preparation anticipated for early childhood educators and librarians. Early childhood educators and librarians know the children with whom they are working best and can and should modify activities for younger or older children as necessary. These activities were created with a variety of contexts in mind, whether library programming, early childhood education settings, story times in public and school libraries, public school classrooms, and for use in homes. As you plan activities, please keep in mind both the ages and developmental stages of children who may participate with you, as well as the context in which the activity is taking place.





INFANTS (BIRTH-12 MONTHS)

FROM THE STORY

EASY PREP

Text Talk (Standard B:4): Choose a page from the book that does not have too much text or is not too “busy” and talk about the illustration with babies. For example, you might turn to the page where Mr. Rabbit discovers he has new neighbors and meets the Otters for the first time and talk with babies about this page. Talk about the colors, the movement, what Mr. Rabbit might be thinking based on his expression, and the reaction of the Rabbits. Be sure to listen to babies and respond to them too.

MODERATE PREP

Nursery Rhyme Time (Standard B:4): Share a nursery rhyme about a wise old owl with babies. If you have a stuffed animal of an owl, you can use it as you recite the nursery rhyme too:

A Wise Old Owl

A wise old owl lived in an oak

The more he saw, the less he spoke

The less he spoke, the more he heard

Why can't we all be like that wise old bird?

(http://nurseryrhymes.com/A_Wise_Owl_n.d.)

EXTENSIVE PREP

Neighborhoods(Standard B:4): Have pictures of different neighborhoods available for infants for tummy time. Choose pictures from the internet and print them, cut out pictures from magazines, or bring in photos you have from home. Using contact paper, place them on the floor and cover them so infants can explore them, and then talk about the different neighborhoods and neighbors.

DIVERSITY/CULTURES

EASY PREP

Describing Words (Standard B:4): Talk with babies using specific describing words. Spend a few minutes with each baby, making eye contact, touching fingers or toes, and talking about her curly dark hair or his bright, contagious smile. Talk about what makes each child unique and why each baby is special to you.

MODERATE PREP

Global Music and Dancing (Standard C:1; C:2) : Put on music and dance with babies. Select music from different parts of the world and encourage babies to move to the beat. Check out <https://www.putumayo.com/history/> for one source for global music and to find suggestions for music online or to see if your library has their music available to borrow.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Special Babies (Standard B:4): Using the template (see template on page 48), encourage families to share what makes their baby special and share the results in a “neighborhood” on the wall.

MANNERS

EASY PREP

Baby Signs (Standard B:4): Teach babies the baby sign for “please” and “thank you”. The sign for “please” involves taking a flat palm and rubbing it in a circle over your chest (see <http://www.babysignlanguage.com/dictionary/p/please/>). The sign for “thank you” uses a flat hand at the base of the chin, which then moves out toward the person (see <http://www.babysignlanguage.com/dictionary/t/thank-you/>). Use each sign in conversation with babies, saying the word aloud as you use the sign at the same time.

MODERATE PREP

Friendly Faces Collage (Standard B:4): Take pictures of infants' "friendly faces" as part of a collage to display. Just like in *Do Unto Otters* where Mr. Rabbit is explaining what it means to be friendly, take photos of babies with their friendly faces and label them. This could include making eye contact, being cheerful, waving hello, or whatever else. Include captions so others know what being friendly means and how this is part of "good manners" too.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Family Thank You Notes (Standard C:1): Write thank you notes with babies to families. Trace around infants' hands with a crayon or use non-toxic paint to create a handprint or footprint and then use the print as a background on which to write a thank you. Write all of the reasons for which you are thankful to families for sharing in the life of their infant.

WOODLAND ANIMALS

EASY PREP

Woodland Animals Discussion (Standard B:4): Talk about the different animals in the book *Do Unto Otters*, including the owl, rabbits, and otters. See if there are other animals you can find to discuss, including the bear, raccoons, birds, and insects too.

MODERATE PREP

Stuffed Animal Share (Standard B:4; C:2): Have a variety of wildlife stuffed animals for infants to discover. Try to have a rabbit and an owl, as well as otters if possible too. Talk to babies about each of them and see what catches their attention as they explore the different animals and play with them. You might also ask families to help contribute "neighbors to the forest" too.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Wood Life Textures (Standard B:4; C:2): Bring in or have available items that allow babies to explore different textures one might find within the woods. Consider twigs or bark, smooth stones, grass or moss, feathers from a craft store, faux fur, and other objects that are child safe and are not choking hazards. Talk about each object as you supervise infants interacting with them, including where they might be found, what color or texture they are, and how they feel.





TODDLERS

FROM THE STORY

EASY PREP

Look for the Bee (Standard B:4): Ask toddlers to help you keep track of the bee on the pages of the story. You can choose one helper or have them all “keep an eye out” for the bee and raise a hand when they see the bee. (Note the bee is not on every page so this can be a great way to practice patience).

MODERATE PREP

Fish Pass (Standard B:4): Talk about honesty with toddlers and what it means to tell the truth by singing an adaptation of this children’s song and passing around a stuffed animal fish or a paper fish you’ve cut out and decorated:

Who stole the fishie from Mr. Otter’s plate? Who me? Not you.
Couldn’t be! Then who? [pass fish to child]

[insert name of child holding fish] stole the fishie from Mr. Otter’s plate? Who me? Not you. Couldn’t be! Then who? [pass fish to new child]

[insert name of child holding fish] stole the fishie from Mr. Otter’s plate? Who me? Not you. Couldn’t be! Then who? [pass fish to new child] and so on...

EXTENSIVE PREP

Toddler Cooperation (Standard B:4; C:3): Tell toddlers that you have a problem and you need their help in solving it, which will involve cooperation. Have a stack of books that need to go in a bag, a pile of art materials that need to be put away, or some other task that will involve a group of toddlers and require them to cooperate (this will also require some planning as far as what materials you would like them to address and the timing for which to do so). A great way to address this is to have toddlers clean up activities at the end of the

craft sessions. Ask them to work together or cooperate and help you clean up, helping you think about where items go, who will put what where, and how we can work together to accomplish the tasks. You might show them the page where the animals are working together, or cooperate, as a reminder.

DIVERSITY/CULTURES

EASY PREP

Thumbprint Animals (Standard C:3): Using a stamp pad, make thumbprint animals with toddlers. Have each toddler place his thumb on the pad and then on a small sheet of paper. Help him or her draw rabbit ears and whiskers for Mr. Rabbit, the owl eyes and beak, or the otter eyes and nose. Talk about how the thumbprint is unique, even though the animal characteristics of the beak and eyes might be the same.

MODERATE PREP

Character Masks (Standard C:3): Have Mr. Rabbit, Otter or Owl masks for children to decorate. Using the templates (see template on page 49), cut out masks for children (be sure to cut-out the eyes) and allow them to color or decorate them with supervision. Have crayons and other materials available such as washable markers. Hole punch two holes on each side of the mask and thread yarn through to be able to secure the mask around the toddlers’ heads.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Color Exploration (Standard C:3): Have different colors of non-toxic paint in cups for toddlers to explore (have either old t-shirts or smocks available for toddlers to wear to cover clothes). Try red, blue, and yellow paints in different cups and allow toddlers to dip their fingers in and finger paint on large pieces of paper and smear the paint around to see what happens. Talk about how the paint starts

out as three distinct colors and then blurs together. Ask them what they think about their final products. As their paintings dry, talk about how even though they used the same three colors and blended them together, each toddler's painting is as unique as the child that painted it.

MANNERS

EASY PREP

Importance of Manners (Standard B:4): As you read *Do Unto Otters*, talk with toddlers about why it is important to say please and thank you. Ask them to share with you about a time when they said please or thank you. After reading, be sure to thank them for reading with you too.

MODERATE PREP

Favorite Manners Sharing (Standard B:4): After reading the book with toddlers, ask each one to share what his or her favorite “manner” was. For example, you might first share that your favorite manner was sharing with others. Be sure to give each toddler time to share his or her idea and write their ideas on chart paper or a white board. You can also go back to the pages in the book and visit the illustrations as they share, asking toddlers to share a time in their own life when they used those manners too.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Toddler Table Manners (Standard B:4; C:1; C:3): Have a place setting available for each toddler as part of the dramatic play area, including a napkin, plate, cup, fork, spoon, and child-friendly knife. Talk with toddlers about how to use each utensil and have items available they can practice scooping up with a spoon, such as wooden spools or play dough. Or, include these items as part of their actual meal and encourage their use, talking about how to use each item during the meal.

WOODLAND ANIMALS

EASY PREP

Wildlife Watch (Standard C:4): Look out your window to see what wildlife might happen by. Keep a journal with toddlers for writing down the time you see any wildlife, including what it might be, when it came by, and what the wildlife was doing. Talk about any trends you notice as you visit the window, such as if a squirrel happens to come by the window at the same time each day.

MODERATE PREP

Book Comparison (Standard B:4): Look at the list of books about wildlife for toddlers (see page 28) and ask your children's librarian for other books that will interest toddlers, choosing storybooks, information books, and other books too. Leave books out for toddlers to explore on their own. Talk with toddlers about the different animals they see in the books, asking questions such as, “what do you notice about this animal?” or “how is this animal like the one in *Do Unto Otters*?”

EXTENSIVE PREP

Wildlife Says (Standard B:4; C:3; C:4): Play “wildlife says” with toddlers. Ask toddlers to “dig like raccoons” or “hop like rabbits”. This might require some reading about what different animals in the forest do in order to create a list to keep toddlers interested. As an alternative, you can give each toddler an animal from the forest and ask each child to think about how that animal might act. As you walk around, ask each child one at a time to lead the group in acting like that animal for a few minutes while the others follow suit.



PRESCHOOLERS

FROM THE STORY

EASY PREP

Book Vocabulary (Standard LL:1; A:2): Talk with preschoolers about vocabulary words in the book, such as cooperate or appreciate. Look through the book before reading to see what words might be new or unfamiliar and explain those words as you read them, using words preschoolers already know. You might explain cooperate as “when we work together, like when Alex and Emilia helped one another put the books away yesterday. They were able to cooperate and work side-by-side to help one another out.”

MODERATE PREP

Coloring Sheet (Standard LL:2:2): Print out the coloring sheet (see template on page 50) from the story. Have a variety of materials available for children to use to color it, including crayons, markers, colored pencils, tissue paper and glue, or other materials you think they would like to complete the coloring sheet.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Character Puppets (Standard LL:1; A:1): Using the template (see template on page 51), print the characters from the story on to thick paper or regular paper and then glue onto card stock. Encourage children to color and/or decorate the characters however they would like from available materials (consider having crayons, markers, colored pencils, construction papers, tissue paper, and glue available). Help children glue or attach a craft stick to their character to create a puppet that they can then use in cooperation with other children to re-tell the story.

DIVERSITY/CULTURES

EASY PREP

Special Preschoolers (Standard LL:4:3; LL:4:5): Talk with preschoolers about what makes them special. Have them sit in a circle so they can all see one another. Ask each preschooler to describe him or herself in one word. Go around the circle, repeating each child’s name and their describing word, asking them to help you remember if you forget, and telling them that you probably will need their help. See if they can help you repeat all of the names and all of the describing words when you have talked with every child.

MODERATE PREP

Handprint Wreath (Standard LL:5:1): Make a handprint wreath with preschoolers. Trace children’s hands with crayon on pieces of paper and cut the paper out. You can have children choose what color paper they would like to use, or instead of tracing, use washable, non-toxic paint and make handprints, allowing them to dry before cutting them out (time and space may dictate which option is best). Connect each “handprint” using glue and hang the wreath in a shared space. Talk about the size and shape of handprints, asking children what they notice about what is unique and what is similar in the wreath.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Name History (Standard LL:6:3): Ask families to share the history of their child’s name using the template provided (see template on page 52). Compile the histories in a class book that you can share as part of read aloud or create a bulletin board or share them on a wall as part of a shared space to let others know about the unique history of each child’s name.



MANNERS

EASY PREP

If You're Happy (Standard LL:3:3): Sing this song with preschoolers to the tune of "If you're happy and you know it", but modified to include different manners

If you're friendly and you know it, say hello "hello!"

If you're friendly and you know it, say hello "hello!"

If you're friendly and you know it, then your words will surely show it,

If you're friendly and you know it, say hello "hello!"

If you're polite and you know it, say a please "pl-ease"

If you're polite and you know it, say a please "pl-ease"

If you're polite and you know it, then your words will surely show it,

If you're polite and you know it, say a please "pl-ease"

If you're happy and you know it say, thank you "thank you!"

If you're happy and you know it say, thank you "thank you!"

If you're happy and you know it, then your words will surely show it,

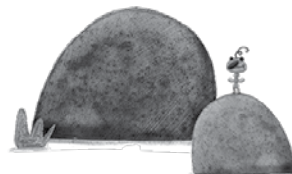
If you're happy and you know it say, thank you "thank you!"

MODERATE PREP

Manners Vote (Standard LL:1:1; LL:2:3) Have preschoolers help you list the manners shared in the book on chart paper or a white board. You might go back through the book after you read it to help refresh your memory or theirs, but see how many they can remember before you do this. Then, ask them to vote on which one they think is the most important. Tally the votes and then rank them in order, discussing how they feel about the order of importance.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Tea Party (Standard LL:4:3): Host a tea party for preschoolers. You can use play or pretend materials or real supplies with cups of tea, small snacks, individual napkins, and send invitations too. Talk with preschoolers about expected manners during the tea party, including asking for items to be passed, saying "please" and "thank you" when asking for and receiving items, not talking with their mouths full of food, and other expectations for how to behave during the party. Be sure to sit with them during the tea party and have a conversation. Thank each preschooler for coming too.



WOODLAND ANIMALS

EASY PREP

Animal Observation Connection (Standard LL:6:3): Ask preschoolers to think about a time when they have been in the woods or seen one of the animals in the story as you read. Encourage them to connect the animals in the story to their own lives. Where were they when they saw a rabbit, or an owl, or a raccoon? What was the animal doing? What were they doing?

MODERATE PREP

Memory Game (Standard LL:6:4): Using the template (see template on page 53) for the memory card games, print out on thick paper or card stock and cut the cards to create a memory game for preschoolers. Place all of the cards face down in front of two to four players. Remind preschoolers to take turns flipping over two cards at a time to find a match. Encourage them to talk about the animals in the pair and where they might find it in the woods (does it live on the ground, in a tree, etc.). This is also a good “manners” activity in turn taking and winning gracefully.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Animal Exploration (Standard LL:6:1; LL:6:5): Bring in additional books about the specific animals in Do Unto Otters. Visit your local library to borrow informational books about rabbits, otters, owls, bears, raccoons, and other woodland animals appropriate for preschoolers to allow them to explore more about these kinds of animals. Work with a natural science center or local conservation center to have animal artifacts available in the science center or as part of a display (either in Plexiglas cases or for children to handle with supervision) for further exploration, such as owl pellets too.





SCHOOL AGE

FROM THE STORY

EASY PREP

Animal Greeting (Standard SL-6): Have children take turns greeting one another like characters from the book. Encourage them to think about how an owl might greet someone (“Wheeeelcome to my home”) or a rabbit (using a bunny nose that twitches “I’m so pleased you are here.”) Children can also have the option to pass if they would like to use their usual voice too.

MODERATE PREP

Rules Identification (Standard RL-7): Talk about what it means to play fair and identify rules for doing so identified in the book or in your classroom. Have children look at the illustrations on this page and talk about what they see in the illustrations. What connections can they make to these illustrations and their own lives? What additional rules would they add? Using the template (see template on page 54) what other rules for playing fair would they add?

EXTENSIVE PREP

Considering Considerate (Standard L-4; W-1): Ask school age children to think carefully about what it means to be considerate. After reading the section about asking otters to be considerate, ask children to look carefully at the nine things on the page about what it means to be a considerate neighbor. Talk with children about what each of these means. Ask them why they think the author chose these particular things, if there are any that they would add, and if so why. After you finish the book, use the template (see template on page 55) and ask children to write about the one thing about being considerate that they think is most important or that they connected to the most.

DIVERSITY/CULTURES

EASY PREP

Describe Me (Standard L-5): Ask children to list all of the words that describe them using the template (see template on page 58). As they share the words, write them on chart paper or a marker board, noting the connections or shared words among the group as well as those words that are unique to members of the group.

MODERATE PREP

Words for You (Standard L-5; W-2): Have children write a description of another person using the template (see template on page 59) provided. They can start with a list of words that describe that person, then what makes that person special to them, and finally, why they are thankful for that person. Children can choose to share their writing with the person or keep it for themselves.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Family Potluck (Standard SL:4): In Do Unto Otters, Mr. Rabbit wants to share his favorite treat with the Otters. Invite families to do the same by having a potluck. They can share recipes for a class cookbook and then bring in these recipes to share. Be sure to share any allergies or food intolerances in the classroom and have ingredients clearly labeled on each dish at the potluck. Sharing family recipes can be a great way to share more about one another’s backgrounds and cultures too.

MANNERS

EASY PREP

Cooperation Wall (Standard L-4; SL-6): Have children share a time when they had to cooperate. You might spend some time talking about the meaning of the word cooperate as well to be sure everyone has an idea of the meaning of the word and identify synonyms too. Have children share aloud or write their ideas on a poster to share in the classroom or in the shared space in the library.

MODERATE PREP

Thank You Notes (Standard W-4): Write a thank you note with the stationary guide (see template on page 56) provided. Encourage children to think of something someone else has done for them and why it was special. Talk about the format for a thank you note, how it is different from a story or other types of text they might see. Model on chart paper or a white board how we write a thank you note, including the date, the salutation, body of the note, and the signature too.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Global Manners (Standard W-6): Using the template provided (see template on page 57) and the internet look up different ways to say please and thank you and share what they have learned with one another. You might also look to see the origin of different expressions such “please with a cherry on top”.

WOODLAND ANIMALS

EASY PREP

Wildlife Visit (Standard SL-1): Arrange for a visit with a wildlife conservation officer. Check out the Michigan Department of Natural Resources website at http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10369_46264-266776--,00.html for more information.

MODERATE PREP

Wildlife Research (Standard W-2): Research different animals that live in the forest. Using the template (see template on page 60) provided or your own, have children find out more about specific animals in the woods in Michigan. Ask them to find out what that animal eats, where it lives, and what it does during different times of the year.

EXTENSIVE PREP

Wildlife Walk (Standard W-8): Have children visit nearby woods to look for signs of wildlife. Before your walk, print off cards or display animal tracks so they can see what specific footprints, such as rabbit footprints, might look like. Ask them to carry notebooks or have a “class camera” so they can take photos of signs of foraging on plants or look for animals homes. Be sure to share with them that anything they take into the woods they need to take out as well, and to be sure to leave any animal homes undisturbed.





TEMPLATES

& ACTIVITY SHEETS

INFANTS

Special Babies - 48



TODDLERS

Character Masks - 49



PRESCHOOLERS

Coloring Sheet - 50

Character Puppets - 51

Name History - 52

Memory Game - 53

SCHOOL AGE

Rules Identification - 54

Considering Considerate - 55

Thank You Note - 56

Global Manners - 57

Describe Me - 58

Words for You - 59

Wildlife Research - 60



INFANTS

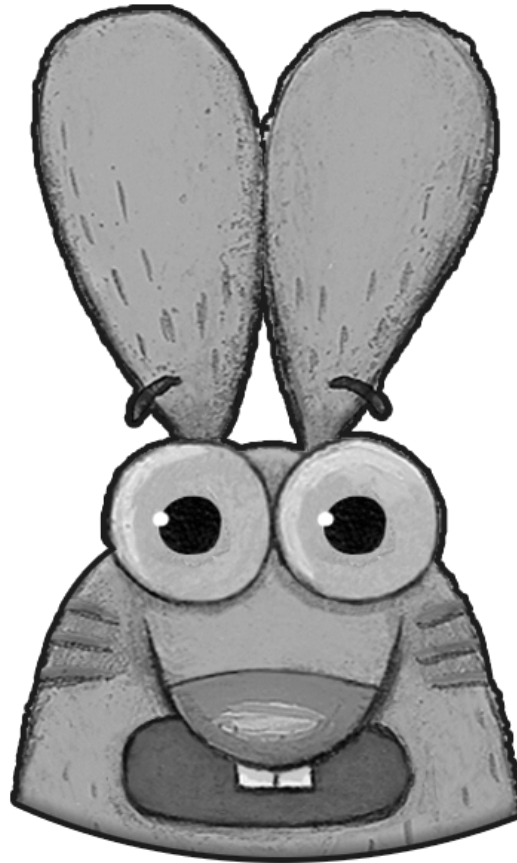
SPECIAL BABIES: WHAT MAKES YOUR BABY SPECIAL

Baby's Name (In Banner):



TODDLERS

CHARACTER MASKS:



Copy mask at 250%. Suggested items for decorations for masks based on what is available or can be purchased from craft store. *(Adult supervision recommended as many of these items are choking hazards, and adults should either pre-cut the holes for eyes or assist children in doing so):*

- Pom poms
- Ribbon/Yarn (to attach mask to face)
- Foam shapes
- Felt (for ears)
- Crayons/markers/colored pencils
- Construction paper
- Pipe cleaner (for whiskers)
- Glitter
- Cotton Balls

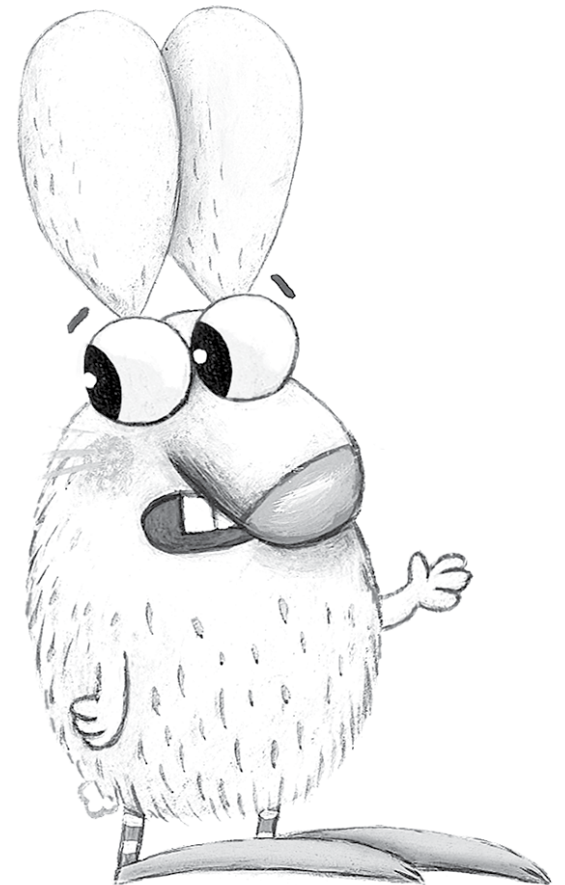
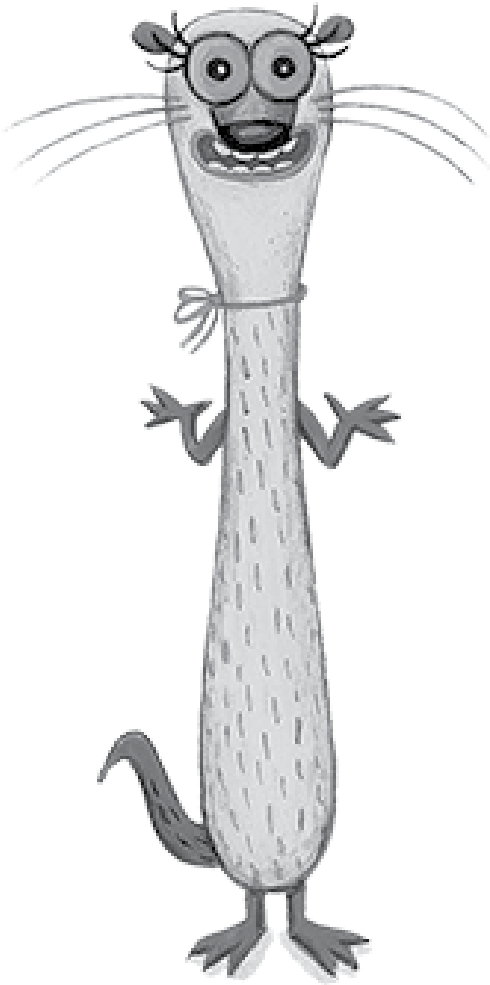
PRESCHOOLERS

COLORING SHEET:



PRESCHOOLERS

CHARACTER PUPPETS:



PRESCHOOLERS

NAME HISTORY:

Child's Name: _____

Meaning of Name (if known) _____

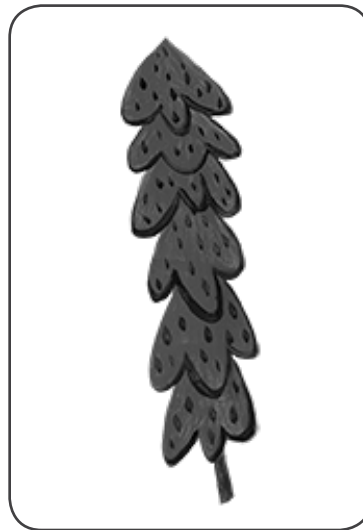
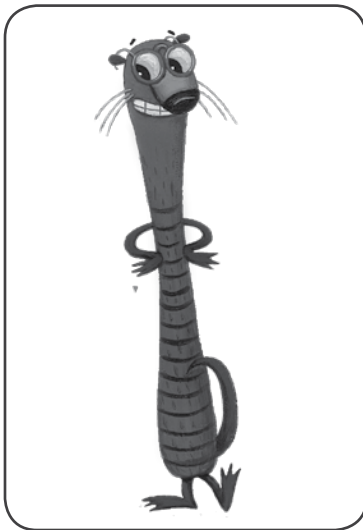
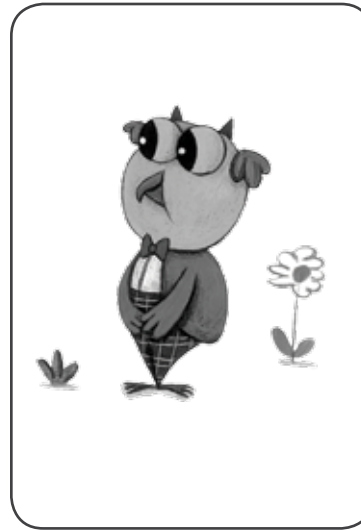
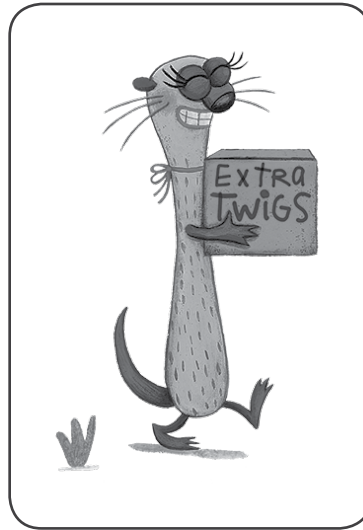
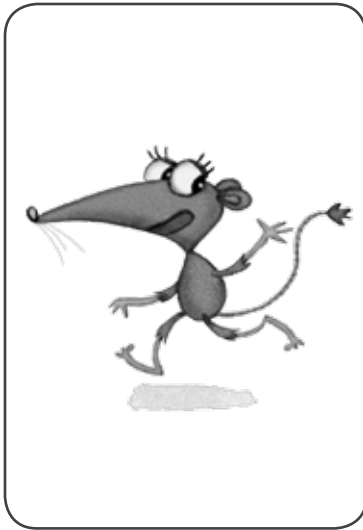
Why Name was Chosen _____

Anything else special about the name _____



PRESCHOOLERS

MEMORY GAME:



SCHOOL AGE

Rules Identification: School age children can use this table to identify rules in the book, write about their connections to this rule, and add any rules they think are missing.

RULES IDENTIFICATION

Rules for Playing Fair in <i>Do Unto Otters</i>	My Connection to this Rule	Rule I Would Like to Add

SCHOOL AGE

CONSIDERING CONSIDERATE: What does it mean to be considerate?



BEING A GOOD LISTENER

BEING ON TIME

CARING FOR ALL CREATURES

ASKING BEFORE
BORROWING SOMETHING

OPENING THE DOOR FOR SOMEONE

BEING PATIENT

NOT LITTERING

HELPING NEIGHBOR
UNTANGLE EARS

RESPECTING THE ELDERLY

What is the most important part of being considerate to you?



WRITING A THANK YOU

SCHOOL AGE

Global Manners: table for please and thank you with suggestions for different language
(bonus: origin of expressions like please with a cherry on top)

Using the internet or books you have available, look up the words in different languages for please and thank you. As a bonus, find where the expression “please with a cherry on top” comes from

Language	Please	Thank You
Spanish		
French		
German		
Italian		
Russian		

Bonus: “Please with a cherry on top” comes from:

SCHOOL AGE

DESCRIBE ME:

List all of the words that describe you



SCHOOL AGE

WORDS FOR YOU:

Choose someone else and write a list of words describing that person:

Now write what makes that person special to you:

Next, write why you are thankful for that person:

SCHOOL AGE

WILDLIFE RESEARCH: Template for researching animals

Name of Animal: _____

Where it lives: _____

What it eats: _____

Predators: _____

Important facts I learned about this animal:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Things others should know about this animal:





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